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13 May 1952

TO: Chief, Organization and Methods Service
FROM:
SUBJECT: Cable Traffic

1. PROBLEM.--What can be done to reduce outgoing cable traffic at Signal Center after 1500 hours?

2. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM.--

- a. On 6 March 1952 the Deputy Director (Administration) issued Notice relating to cable traffic. See Annex "A".
- b. Area Divisions of OPC and OSO transmit 76 per cent of all cables. The number of cables received from the field approximately equals the number transmitted. See Annex "B".
- c. Commercial rate for transmitting the average cable is \$10. See Annex "C".
- d. Cost to the Agency of transmitting the average dispatch is approximately \$.90. See Annex "D".
- e. "Routine" cables are transmitted by Signal Center in four to six hours. "Deferred" cables, which are processed last, are transmitted in eight to twelve hours.
- f. Dispatches are delivered in an average of 7.3 days. See Annex "E".
- g. 75.2 per cent of cables transmitted by Area Divisions arrive at Signal Center between 1500 and 2000 hours. Approximately 80.1 per cent of these are "routine", and 14.4 per cent are "deferred". Incoming cables arrive more uniformly. See Annexes "F" and "G".
- h. The greatest number of cables are received at Signal Center for transmission between 1700 and 1900 hours. See Annex "H".
- i. Staff of Signal Center is divided into three shifts processing up to 600 cables per 24 hours. See Annex "I".

3. DISCUSSION.--

- a. The average cable costs the Agency \$.10 more than the average dispatch. However, cables are used more frequently than dispatches because cables are believed more secure than dispatches and because cables are received within hours whereas dispatches require a considerably longer time to deliver. Division personnel believe that dispatches require "weeks" to deliver, although actual time is far less. See Annex "E".
- b. The cost of transmission of "routine" and "deferred" cables is the same. The former are used more frequently by most Divisions because of the time factor, although the processing time does not differ substantially. See 2.e. above. Few Divisions and Branches make an effort to use "deferred" cables where practicable.
- c. Coordination of cables with elements of the Division or with other Divisions is the primary cause of delay in delivery to Signal Center. Of secondary importance is courier service, which is not direct between Divisions and Signal Center. RI and Personnel have experienced difficulty in recruitment of couriers because of promotional limitations and sex restrictions. In some cases, personnel in grades up to GS-11 deliver cables to Signal Center in order to facilitate transmission. Finally, many cables are written in response to incoming cables which arrive in equal numbers throughout the day. (See Annex "G".) Time

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differential between the field and headquarters is a minor factor which few Branches emphasize. There is a general tendency for Division personnel to hold up cables until the close of business, especially on Thursday and Friday.

- d. Signal Center staff is smaller during the heavy traffic hours than earlier in the day. While temporary reassignments have been made to handle the workload, no permanent readjustment has been made. Staff of Signal Center is 55 under the T/O. There is also a heavy turnover because of promotional limitations and reassignments outside the Center. Employees object to working on the 1545 to 2415 shift.

4. CONCLUSIONS.--

- a. Because of misconceptions regarding dispatches, cable traffic is excessive. A substantial saving can be made by greater utilization of dispatches wherever possible.
- b. Notice [] has not been complied with. While Signal Center peak loads cannot be completely eliminated Division personnel can utilize "deferred" cables more frequently and concerted efforts can be made to deliver cables more uniformly throughout the day and week.
- c. Delivery service to Signal Center is not satisfactory and has resulted in unnecessary delays.
- d. Signal Center personnel have not been utilized effectively to handle peak loads.

5. ACTION RECOMMENDED.--It is recommended that:

- a. Division Chiefs be instructed to take action necessary to ensure:
 - (1) utilization of dispatches rather than cables where possible;
 - (2) compliance with Notice [] regarding delivery to Signal Center and use of "deferred" cables; and,
 - (3) desirable brevity of cables.
- b. Signal Center staff be increased to present T/O and that personnel on the 0745 to 1615 shift be reassigned to the 1545 to 2415 shift in sufficient numbers, as determined by the Chief, Signal Center, to be necessary for better handling of the workload.
- c. A position be created for each of the following: FE, WE, and EE, to be filled by male or female personnel, with responsibility for collection and delivery of incoming and outgoing cables and cable copies between Divisions and Signal Center at specified hours; and that an employee of GS-3 or lower be designated in each of the other Divisions to perform such duties.
- d. Signal Center issue a monthly report to Division Chiefs indicating number, precedence nature and hours of delivery to Signal Center of cables transmitted during the preceding month.

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ANNEXES:

"A", Notice [] "B", Cables Transmitted & Incoming Cables; "C", Commercial Rates for Cables [] Stations); "D", Average Cost of Sending an Item by Pouch; "E", Average Courier Pouch Time Between CIA Headquarters and Various Overseas Stations; "F"1, Outgoing Cables Received at Signal Center; "F"2, Outgoing Cables Received at Signal Center; "G", Incoming Cables Received at Signal Center; "H", Outgoing Cables Received at Signal Center.

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